



How do I become an Allied Health Professional?

Degree	Apprenticeship
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The most common route into the Allied Health Professions is through a degree level qualification. This can be an undergraduate degree (usually 3-4 years) or as a Masters course (usually 2-3 years) following an existing degree. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AHP apprenticeships can be available but there are currently only a small number of these opportunities. They are usually in high demand and are likely to take longer to achieve registration. Often, they are made available to existing staff members as a career development opportunity rather than advertised to external applicants, although this isn't always the case. If you are interested in this route, it is worth contacting apprenticeship teams at local organisations to find out more. You may want to consider joining an organisation in a support worker role and enquiring about career progression.

What qualifications or experience will I need?

- You usually require A Levels. Grade requirements and specific subjects may differ across courses and universities, but often require a science.
- Five GCSEs (grades A-C), including English Language, Maths and at least one science are usually also required.
- It may be useful for you to consider relevant work experience or career conversations as part of your personal statement for university applications. Careers teams in NHS trusts may be able to facilitate this and many offer tailored career advice.
- Working in local care or charity settings can also provide useful experience.

What will my training involve?

- AHP courses contain academic teaching and assessment, as well as a number of clinical placements which are essential for your training.
- If you are able to drive and have access to a vehicle then, depending on location, this can greatly widen your options for these. Universities generally expect students to be prepared to travel reasonable distances and consider the option of alternative accommodation in order to access placement opportunities. Driving is an essential skill for Paramedics.
- Financial assistance is available for travel and accommodation costs over and above your normal daily travel, so you won't be out of pocket.



What financial support might be available to me during my training?

- If you complete a degree, the majority of the Allied Health Professions are eligible for a training grant of £5,000 per year from the NHS Learning Support Fund which doesn't need to be repaid.
- In addition to this, certain "specialist subjects" receive an additional £1,000 per year. For AHPs, this would currently apply to Diagnostic Radiography, Therapeutic Radiography, Podiatry, Orthoptics and Prosthetics/Orthotics.
- This fund can be used to support one healthcare degree per person. So, if you are undertaking a second degree but your first wasn't in a healthcare related subject, you can still apply for funding.
- Course tuition fees are usually in the region of £9,250 per year. Student loans can be applied for in addition to this.
- If you complete an apprenticeship, your employer will pay your fees and you will also receive a salary.
- If you are concerned about the cost of living whilst studying and are able to live at home, you could think about applying for courses in your local area. In addition, it could be possible to sign up for Bank (temporary) support work with a local trust to give you an additional income and valuable experience in a clinical setting.

What would my career opportunities be?

- NHS wages are structured around a series of fixed pay bands, making it easy to plan the financial aspects of your career progression. Various staff benefits are offered, and you would also be eligible for numerous NHS discounts offered by companies around the UK.
- The starting salary for newly registered practitioners (after graduation) would be at Band 5 level, currently from £27,055 per year. The average starting salary for a university graduate is around £24,000 (Higher Education Statistics Agency 2023).
- There are set salary increases at regular intervals for each banding level.
- You could progress your career in specialist clinical practice, leadership, governance or research – to name but a few!
- A range of part time and flexible working options are often available to enable staff to balance their personal and professional commitments. On average, AHPs tend to be rostered across a more typical working week, with less need for weekend and overnight shifts than nursing and medical colleagues.

<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning/study-and-training/considering-or-university/financial-support-university>